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CHAPTER 24 RUTHLESSNESS



"CURSED
CHILD."
"BEG FOR THE
REMISSION OF
THY SINS."

"LET ME
KISS THY
LIPS,
TOKANAAN!"

"KNEEL
BEFORE THE
ANGEL OF
DEATH WHO
ALIGHTS AT
THIS PALACE."



"SUFFER
ME TO
KISS THY
LIPS!"

GOOD,
GOOD...
IT SEEMS
SHE'S
GRASPED
THE ROLE
OF
"SALOME".

"PRIN-
CESS,
PLEASE
CALM
DOWN!"







"INDEED, I
WILL HAVE
THY LIPS."

"THIS IS
NOT OVER,
IOKANAAN."

"I WILL
KISS THY
LIPS."



LOOKS LIKE
YOUR ACTING
IMPROVED AFTER I
RIPPED IT APART.



RIPPED
APART
...
YOU
SAID?

JUST
LIKE HOW
SALOME
REACTED
TOWARDS
IOKANAAN'S
REJECTION.

UNO-
KUN
...



YOU
HAD
NO-
THING
TO DO
WITH
IT.

DON'T
GET
THE
WRONG
IDEA.



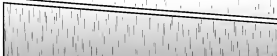
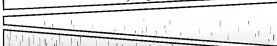
THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME
I'VE SEEN HER
GET ANGRY
LIKE THAT.



SINCE THE
FIRST TIME
I SAW HER.



I'VE ALWAYS
THOUGHT SHE
HAD THAT KIND OF
TEMPERAMENT.





WHAT'S
THE
MATTER?
YOU KEEP
LOOKING
OUTSIDE.



IS
THAT
SO.

SO I'M
WORRIED
IF SHE'LL
BE ABLE
TO COME

OH, IT'S
COMING
DOWN
EVEN
HARDER
THAN
BEFORE.

NO,

I AM
SIMPLY
FRIGHT-
ENED

OF
OUR
DAUGH-
TER
WHO
IS
HEAD-
ING
HERE
TO
VISIT.





MAHA!



DID SHE
ALWAYS
SPEAK
WITH
THAT
KIND
OF
VOICE?

WEL-
COME
BACK,
NINA.

I'M
BACK
PAPA!



OH.

DING
DING
DING

DID
SHE...

ALWAYS
HAVE
SUCH A
LOOK IN
HER
EYES?



DID
SHE
ALWAYS
SMILE
LIKE
THAT?

I'M
HOME!



HOW
COULD I BE
HAVING SUCH
THOUGHTS?

...
STOP.



NO,
IT'S
FINE!

THE
STA-
TION
ISN'T
SO FAR
FROM
HERE.

THAT
SOME-
ONE
MIGHT
BE IM-
PERSO-
NATING
MY
DAUGH-
TER.



SEE...
THE WAY
SHE
LOWERS
HER EYES
AS SHE
BRUSHES
AWAY HER
HAIR...

IT'S
THE SAME
AS THE
USUAL
NINA, NO
MATTER
HOW YOU
LOOK.



WELCOME
BACK,
NINA.

IT MUST BE
TERRIBLE
WALKING IN
THAT RAIN.



YET,



WHAT
IF...

THIS
IS A
COM-
PLETE
STRAN-
GER
...

WITH A
TERRIFY-
INGLY
EX-
QUIS-ITE
ABILITY
OF IMA-
TATION
...



.....



I'M
GOING
TO
PREPARE
DINNER.

OKAY.



SHE'S
BEEN
PRETTY
MUCH THE
SAME...

YEAH,
WELL...

HEY,
PAPA,
HOW HAS
HAMA BEEN
DOING SINCE
THEN?



OR SEEM-
INGLY REST-
LESS.

I SEE
...

FROM
TIME TO TIME
SHE APPEARS
TO BE PEOP
IN THOUGHT
WITH AN OMBAS
LOOK ON HER
FACE.



YOU
SHOULD
JUST
BE YOUR
NORMAL
CHEERFUL
SELF,
LIKE
ALWAYS.

NINA...
DON'T
STRESS
OVER
IT.

THAT
WAY, I'M
SURE
MAMA WILL
FEEL LESS
ANXIOUS.

I WONDER
WHAT'S
WRONG...



NOT TO
MENTION
THAT IT'LL
BECOME
DIFFICULT
TO USE
NINA'S FACE
AFTERWARD.

IF YOU
DON'T
MANAGE
TO TRICK
THE FATHER,
OUR WRITTEN
SCENARIO
WILL
COME TO
NOTHING.

LISTEN.

YOU
MUST NOT
LET THE
FATHER
DOUBT
YOU.







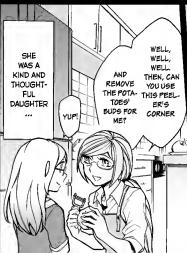


NOW
THAT I
THINK
ABOUT
IT...



THAT
HELPS

I'LL
FEEL
THE POTA-
TOES THEN.



SHE
WAS A
KIND AND
THOUGHT-
FUL
DAUGHTER
...

YUP!

AND
REMOVE
THE POTA-
TOES'
BUDS FOR ME?

WELL,
WELL,
WELL.
THEN, CAN
YOU USE
THIS FEEL-
ER'S
CORNER



MAMA!
I'LL HELP
COOK
TOO!

THERE
WAS A
TIME
LIKE
THIS...



NINA?!

OH MY...
DID
YOU CUT
YOUR
FINGER?

NOT TO
MENTION,
SINCE
THEN...

THAT'S
RIGHT...
NOTHING
HAS
CHANGED
FROM
BEFORE,
NINA IS
STILL
NINA...



I RUN
WANNA
DO IT
EVER
AGAIN.

IT
HURTS

BUT SHE
TRIED TO
FEEL THEM
TOO.

IT WAS
DANGEROUS
SO I TOLD
HER TO ONLY
REMOVE THE
BUDS...



AT
THAT
TIME,
I...



COULDN'T
THINK
CLEARLY.



SO IT'S ONLY
NATURAL THAT
SHE'S ABLE TO
USE A PEELER.

KIMA IS
ALREADY
AN ADULT,

THINK-
ING
ABOUT
IT NOW.



MAMA,
THERE IS
LINT ON YOUR
SHOULDER.



MAMA
..?

!?

DON'T
TOUCH
ME!!!

K
A
L
C
K



I
KNEW
IT...

YOU'RE
NOT
NINA!!!

CHAPTER 24 END